

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.**

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the CT General Assembly:

Good afternoon. My name is Susana Tapia. I am a member of Uniting for a Safe Inclusive Community - Manchester. I'm in favor of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

I'm an undocumented person, and I went through the experience of visiting a hospital without health insurance, which greatly elevated the cost. And as immigrants, we don't know who to call or where to go in order to receive help to solve these kinds of issues. We end up paying the whole amount because the hospital sends the bill to a collection agency, forcing us to create a payment plan, because if you do not pay, they threaten you with court. Because of our status as immigrants, we do not have the resources to pay the bill, much less to pay a lawyer to represent us like an American citizen can. For many of us, having health insurance will be a source of justice because we are the providers for our families, and if something happens to us, that would leave our kids alone and without any economic support. Now is the time to raise our collective voices. We must be seen and listened to, our perspective taken into account. We must be granted free health insurance, because healthcare is a human right.

Please support S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Thank you for your time,

Susana Tapia  
Manchester, CT